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PTO/SB/05 (12/97)
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UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL

(Only for new nonprovisional applications under 37 CFR 1.53(b))

Attorney Docket No.	BLD9-00-055	Total Pages	22
<i>First Named Inventor or Application Identifier</i>			
Allan Anthony Hren			
Express Mail Label No.	EK334879414US		

jc917 U.S. PTO
109/690350

10/17/00

APPLICATION ELEMENTS

See MPEP chapter 600 concerning utility patent application contents.

1. Fee Transmittal Form
(Submit an original, and a duplicate for fee processing)
2. Specification *[Total Pages]* **18**
 - Descriptive title of the Invention
 - Cross References to Related Application
 - Statement Regarding Fed sponsored R & D
 - Reference to Microfiche Appendix
 - Background of the Invention
 - Brief Summary of the Invention
 - Brief Description of the Drawings *(if filed)*
 - Detailed Description
 - Claim(s)
 - Abstract of the Disclosure
3. Drawing(s) *(35 USC 113)* *[Total Sheets]* **2**
4. Oath or Declaration *[Total Pages]* **2**
 - a. Newly executed (original or copy)
 - b. Copy from a prior application (37 CFR 1.63(d)) *(for continuation/divisional with Box 17 completed)*
[Note Box 5 below]
 - i. **DELETION OF INVENTOR(S)**
Signed statement attached deleting inventor(s) named in prior application, see 37 CFR 1.63(d)(2) and 1.33(b).
5. Incorporation by Reference *(useable if Box 4b is checked)*
The entire disclosure of the prior application, from which a copy of the oath or declaration is supplied under Box 4b is considered as being part of the disclosure of the accompanying application and is hereby incorporated by reference therein.

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6. Microfiche Computer Program *(Appendix)*
7. Nucleotide and/or Amino Acid Sequence Submission *(if applicable, all necessary)*
 - a. Computer Readable Copy
 - b. Paper Copy *(identical to computer copy)*
 - c. Statement verifying identify of above copies

ACCOMPANYING APPLICATION PARTS

8. Assignment Papers *(cover sheet & document(s))*
9. 37 CFR 3.73(b) Statement *(when there is an assignee)* Power of Attorney
10. English Translation Document *(if applicable)*
11. Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)/PTO-1449 Copies of IDS Citations
12. Preliminary Amendment
13. Return Receipt Postcard (MPEP 503) *(Should be specifically itemized)*
14. Small Entity Statement filed in prior application, Statement(s) Status still proper and desired
15. Certified Copy of Priority Document(s) *(if foreign priority is claimed)*
16. Other: Express Mail Certificate

17. If a CONTINUING APPLICATION, check appropriate box and supply the requisite information:
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FEE TRANSMITTAL		Complete If Known	
		Application Number	Not yet assigned
		Filing Date	October 17, 2000
		First Named Inventor	Allan Anthony Hren
		Group Art Unit	U.S. 690350
		Examiner Name	10/17/00
TOTAL AMOUNT OF PAYMENT	\$ 750.00	Attorney Docket Number	BLD9-00-055



METHOD OF PAYMENT (check one)		FEES CALCULATION (continued)																																																																																																																																																			
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ADDITIONAL FEES</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Large Entity</th> <th colspan="2">Small Entity</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Fee Code</th> <th>Fee (\$)</th> <th>Fee Code</th> <th>Fee (\$)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>105</td><td>130</td><td>205</td><td>65</td><td>Surcharge - late filing fee or oath</td></tr> <tr><td>127</td><td>50</td><td>227</td><td>25</td><td>Surcharge - late provisional filing fee or cover sheet</td></tr> <tr><td>139</td><td>130</td><td>139</td><td>130</td><td>Non-English specification</td></tr> <tr><td>147</td><td>2520</td><td>147</td><td>2520</td><td>For filing a request for reexamination</td></tr> <tr><td>112</td><td>920*</td><td>112</td><td>920*</td><td>Requesting publication of SIR prior to Examiner action</td></tr> <tr><td>113</td><td>1840*</td><td>113</td><td>1840*</td><td>Requesting publication of SIR after Examiner action</td></tr> <tr><td>115</td><td>110</td><td>215</td><td>55</td><td>Extension for reply within first month</td></tr> <tr><td>116</td><td>390</td><td>216</td><td>195</td><td>Extension for reply within second month</td></tr> <tr><td>117</td><td>890</td><td>217</td><td>445</td><td>Extension for reply within third month</td></tr> <tr><td>118</td><td>1390</td><td>218</td><td>695</td><td>Extension for reply within fourth month</td></tr> <tr><td>128</td><td>1890</td><td>228</td><td>945</td><td>Extension for reply within fifth month</td></tr> <tr><td>119</td><td>310</td><td>219</td><td>155</td><td>Notice of Appeal</td></tr> <tr><td>120</td><td>310</td><td>220</td><td>155</td><td>Filing a brief in support of an appeal</td></tr> <tr><td>121</td><td>270</td><td>221</td><td>135</td><td>Request for oral hearing</td></tr> <tr><td>138</td><td>1510</td><td>138</td><td>1510</td><td>Petition to institute a public use proceeding</td></tr> <tr><td>140</td><td>110</td><td>240</td><td>55</td><td>Petition to revive - intentional</td></tr> <tr><td>141</td><td>1240</td><td>241</td><td>620</td><td>Petition to revive - unintentional</td></tr> <tr><td>142</td><td>1210</td><td>242</td><td>605</td><td>Utility issue fee</td></tr> <tr><td>143</td><td>430</td><td>243</td><td>215</td><td>Design issue fee</td></tr> <tr><td>144</td><td>580</td><td>244</td><td>290</td><td>Plant issue fee</td></tr> <tr><td>122</td><td>130</td><td>122</td><td>130</td><td>Petitions to the Commissioner</td></tr> <tr><td>123</td><td>50</td><td>123</td><td>50</td><td>Petitions related to provisional applications</td></tr> <tr><td>126</td><td>240</td><td>126</td><td>240</td><td>Submission of Information Disclosure Stmt</td></tr> <tr><td>581</td><td>40</td><td>581</td><td>40</td><td>Recording each patent assignment per property (times number of properties)</td></tr> <tr><td>146</td><td>760</td><td>246</td><td>380</td><td>Filing a submission after final rejection (37 CFR 1.129(a))</td></tr> <tr><td>149</td><td>760</td><td>249</td><td>380</td><td>For each additional invention to be examined (37 CFR 1.129(b))</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="4">Other fee (specify) _____</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="4">Other fee (specify) _____</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Large Entity		Small Entity		Fee Code	Fee (\$)	Fee Code	Fee (\$)	105	130	205	65	Surcharge - late filing fee or oath	127	50	227	25	Surcharge - late provisional filing fee or cover sheet	139	130	139	130	Non-English specification	147	2520	147	2520	For filing a request for reexamination	112	920*	112	920*	Requesting publication of SIR prior to Examiner action	113	1840*	113	1840*	Requesting publication of SIR after Examiner action	115	110	215	55	Extension for reply within first month	116	390	216	195	Extension for reply within second month	117	890	217	445	Extension for reply within third month	118	1390	218	695	Extension for reply within fourth month	128	1890	228	945	Extension for reply within fifth month	119	310	219	155	Notice of Appeal	120	310	220	155	Filing a brief in support of an appeal	121	270	221	135	Request for oral hearing	138	1510	138	1510	Petition to institute a public use proceeding	140	110	240	55	Petition to revive - intentional	141	1240	241	620	Petition to revive - unintentional	142	1210	242	605	Utility issue fee	143	430	243	215	Design issue fee	144	580	244	290	Plant issue fee	122	130	122	130	Petitions to the Commissioner	123	50	123	50	Petitions related to provisional applications	126	240	126	240	Submission of Information Disclosure Stmt	581	40	581	40	Recording each patent assignment per property (times number of properties)	146	760	246	380	Filing a submission after final rejection (37 CFR 1.129(a))	149	760	249	380	For each additional invention to be examined (37 CFR 1.129(b))	Other fee (specify) _____				Other fee (specify) _____			
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SUBMITTED BY			Complete (if applicable)		
Typed or Printed Name	Brian C. Kunzler			Reg. Number	38,527
Signature				Date	Oct 17, 2000
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PATENT APPLICATION
Docket No. 1200.2.19
IBM No. BLD9-2000-0055US1

UNITED STATES PATENT APPLICATION

of

Allan Anthony Hren

for

**UNIQUE PRINTER PASS CODE
SYSTEM AND METHOD**

BRIAN C. KUNZLER
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SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84101

UNIQUE PRINTER PASS CODE SYSTEM AND METHOD

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. The Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to systems and methods for remotely providing a unique pass code that is recognizable by a printer. More specifically, the present invention relates to systems and methods that automatically generate a pass code based upon a unique characteristic of the printer and recognizing the pass code by the printer.

2. The Relevant Art

As printer systems increase in complexity and functionality, increased demands are being placed on the printers. For instance, in certain cases, it is desirable to generate a line of printers with varying capabilities. One way to decrease the cost of manufacturing the printers is to make certain features dormant until initialized.

Additionally, printer manufacturers may want to control the enablement of these features. For instance, certain features may require added attention for safety, longevity, or effectiveness purposes. It may be desirable to ensure that operators of these printers have been given proper instruction and training for use of the feature. Additionally, different price points can be achieved for the same printer by enabling only features that are paid for by the customer.

Being able to enable features of a printer after sale of the printer provides the added benefit of allowing customers the luxury of electing to purchase the features after purchasing the printer. Under such a scheme, a customer is allowed to buy the printer without paying for a feature, and to decide later that the feature is desirable. The customer can then contact the printer manufacturer's customer service department and request the feature. After paying

1 the requisite price, and/or undertaking certain training or receiving precautions, the feature
2 is then enabled for the customer.

3 In order to make the process of enabling inherent but dormant features of printers
4 more convenient and effective, it would be beneficial to be able to remotely enable the
5 features. In so doing, it would be particularly beneficial to be able to do so in a manner which
6 is unique to each printer and which is not readily apparent to a customer.

7 Pass codes have been used in the prior art to enable dormant features of products.
8 Nevertheless, the use of pass codes as conducted by the prior art does not meet the particular
9 requirements discussed above as being beneficial for printers. For instance, prior art pass
10 codes are typically standard for a whole line of printers. When a customer has more than one
11 printer, the customer only needs the one pass code and can enable the feature for each of the
12 printers. Additionally, these pass codes run the danger of becoming publically and universally
13 known.

14 Accordingly, it would be beneficial to provide a system and method of uniquely and
15 remotely generating a pass code that is unique to a printer and for independently validating
16 the pass code by the printer. Such a system and method are disclosed herein. Furthermore,
17 many printers are not configured to allow users to conveniently allow a user to add large
18 numbers, so it would be even more beneficial to provide a pass code that is easily entered by
19 a user.

1 **OBJECT AND BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

2 The printer configuration system and method of the present invention have been
3 developed in response to the present state of the art, and in particular, in response to the
4 problems and needs in the art that have not yet been fully solved by currently available printer
5 systems and methods. Accordingly, it is an overall object of the present invention to provide
6 a printer pass code system and method that overcome many or all of the above-discussed
7 shortcomings in the art.

8 To achieve the foregoing object, and in accordance with the invention as embodied
9 and broadly described herein in the preferred embodiment, a printer pass code system and
10 method for remotely generating a unique passcode recognizable by a printer are provided.

11 The printer pass code system in one embodiment comprises a unique character string
12 assigned to a printer, a manipulation algorithm for mathematically manipulating the unique
13 string, and a verification module within the printer for recognizing the mathematically
14 manipulated character string as a pass code. The unique character string may comprise a
15 printer serial number resident within the printer and may be programmed into a digital
16 controller of the printer during manufacturing of the printer.

17 In one embodiment, the manipulation algorithm is embodied within a computer
18 program that is configured to receive the character string as input, conduct mathematical
19 manipulations on the character string, and output the result as the pass code. Preferably, one
20 of the mathematical manipulations is a truncation operation whereby the mathematically
21 manipulated serial number is truncated into a shorter string of characters.

22 The printer is preferably configured to receive entry of the pass code by a user and
23 pass the pass code to the verification module. The verification module is preferably located
24 within the printer and is configured to receive the pass code and to conduct a mathematical
25 manipulation similar to the one used to generate the pass code and to compare the result to
26 the pass code entered into the printer to see if the two codes correspond.

1 A feature enablement module may be provided and is preferably configured to enable
2 a previously disabled feature of the printer in response to the validation module validating the
3 mathematically manipulated character string as a correct pass code for the printer.

4 A method of remotely generating a unique printer pass code recognizable by a printer
5 is also provided under the present invention. In embodiments disclosed herein, the method
6 comprises providing a unique character string for a printer, mathematically manipulating the
7 unique character string, and recognizing the mathematically manipulated character string as
8 a pass code.

9 The unique character string for a printer may comprise a printer serial number
10 resident within the printer, and locating a printer serial number resident within the printer may
11 comprise locating a printer serial number programmed into a digital controller during
12 manufacturing of the printer.

13 Additionally, mathematically manipulating the unique character string may comprise
14 entering the character string into a computer program which receives the character string as
15 input, conducting mathematical manipulations on the character string, and outputting the
16 result as the pass code. In one embodiment, mathematically manipulating the unique
17 character string comprises truncating the result of a series of mathematical operations on the
18 character string.

19 The pass code is preferably provided to a customer in return for the customer
20 performing a desired action. The pass code is then entered into the printer by the customer,
21 and the printer then conducts a mathematical manipulation similar to the one used to generate
22 the pass code and compares the result to the pass code entered into the printer to see if the
23 two codes correspond.

24 A previously dormant feature of the printer is then preferably enabled in response to
25 a favorable result of recognizing the mathematically manipulated character string as a correct
26 pass code for the printer.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In order that the manner in which the advantages and objects of the invention are obtained will be readily understood, a more particular description of the invention briefly described above will be rendered by reference to specific embodiments thereof which are illustrated in the appended drawings. Understanding that these drawings depict only typical embodiments of the invention and are not therefore to be considered to be limiting of its scope, the invention will be described and explained with additional specificity and detail through the use of the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a schematic block diagram illustrating one embodiment of a printer pass code system of the present invention.

Figure 2 is a schematic flow chart diagram illustrating one embodiment of a method of the present invention for remotely generating and using a printer pass code.

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1 **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS**

2 Referring initially to Figure 1, shown therein is schematic block diagram of one
3 embodiment of a printer pass code system of the present invention. As depicted in Figure 1,
4 the system 10 comprises a printer 12 and a pass code generation program 16 resident on a
5 computer 14 that is remote to the printer 12. Shown within the printer 12 is a user interface
6 18 comprised of a serial number provision module 20 and a pass code reception module 22.
7 In embodiments to be discussed herein, the serial number provision module 20 is configured
8 to locate a serial number 26 and to provide that serial number to a user. The pass code
9 reception module 22 is configured to receive a customer pass code 23 from a user.

10 Also present within the printer 12 in the depicted embodiment is a controller 24
11 having resident therein an operative computer software program or code 25 and a serial
12 number 26. The operative computer code 25 is preferably the computer code with which the
13 computer operates. The serial number 26 is preferably a unique number programmed into the
14 controller 24 or other component of the printer 12 during manufacturing of the printer 12.

15 Other unique characteristics of the printer may be used in lieu of a programmed serial
16 number. These include unique character strings such as product registration numbers or
17 service contract numbers. These character strings may be input into the printer by the
18 customer at some point in the printer life, including at the request of a customer service
19 representative, as will be discussed.

20 One or more dormant features 28 are also preferably resident within the printer 12
21 and may be programmed into or controlled by the operative printer code 25. The dormant
22 features 28 are preferably features of the printer such as extra fonts, additional capabilities,
23 automatic drum rotation, and the like for which it is desired that not all customers of the
24 printer initially receive. As discussed above, this may be because not all customers want the
25 feature and are willing to pay for the feature, because the manufacturer wishes to charge more
26

1 for the feature, or because it is desirable to ensure that the customer performs a requisite act
2 before accessing the feature.

3 The requisite acts may include the customer passing through a special training
4 program, receiving special operating instructions, or merely paying a fee for the use of the
5 dormant feature(s) 28.

6 A feature enablement module 30 of the printer 12 is preferably configured to enable
7 selected dormant features upon receipt and validation of the customer pass code 23. The
8 feature enablement module 30 may likewise be contained within the operative printer code
9 25 or may be independent thereof.

10 The printer 12 is also shown provided with a validation module 32. The validation
11 module 32 is preferably configured to receive and validate the customer pass code 23. In one
12 preferred embodiment, this is accomplished by comparing the customer pass code 23 to a
13 printer version of the pass code 33, and validating the customer pass code 23 if it matches the
14 printer version of the pass code 33. The printer version of the pass code is preferably
15 generated by passing it through a mathematical manipulation module 34 similar to a
16 mathematical manipulation module 42 which is used to generate the customer pass code 23.
17 The validation module 32 may be incorporated within the operative printer code 25 or may
18 be independent thereof.

19 The pass code generation program 16 is preferably retained within the manufacturer's
20 control. In one embodiment, the computer 14 is a customer service computer, and the pass
21 code generation program 16 is accessible to customer service personnel or the like from the
22 computer 14. Within the pass code generation program 16 is a user interface 36 comprised
23 of a serial number reception module 38 and a pass code provision module 40. The user
24 interface 36 is preferably a graphical user interface program such as a standard windows
25 program, from which the customer service representative can access the serial number
26 reception module 38 to enter the serial number provided by the customer and from which the

1 customer may access the pass code provision module 40 to receive the pass code generated
2 by the program 16.

3 The pass code generation program 16 also preferably comprises a mathematical
4 manipulation module 42, which in one embodiment is configured to receive the serial number
5 26 through the user interface 36 and to conduct a series of mathematical manipulations on the
6 serial number and to output the result as the customer pass code 23. The mathematical
7 manipulations may include addition/subtraction 44, multiplication 46, division 48, truncation
8 50, and the like. In one embodiment, the mathematical manipulation also comprises a module
9 45 for transforming alphabetic letters to numbers. The truncation operation 45 is, in one
10 embodiment, used to reduce the pass code to a size that is easily entered into the printer by
11 a user. In one embodiment, the serial number contains seven or more characters, and the
12 truncation module truncates the mathematically manipulated result into a shorter pass code,
13 such as a three digit pass code.

14 Referring now to Figure 2, shown therein is a schematic flow chart diagram
15 illustrating one embodiment of a method 100 for remotely generating and using a pass code.
16 The method 100 begins at a step 102 and proceeds to a step 104, where the printer is
17 manufactured. In one embodiment, the printer comprises the printer 12 of Figure 1 and is
18 configured in the manner discussed above. Coincident with the manufacturing of the printer,
19 a serial number 26 (of Figure 1) is in one embodiment implanted into the printer 12 as
20 indicated at a step 105. The serial number 26 is preferably unique to the printer, as discussed
21 above. Of course, the serial number may be merely stamped or printed on the surface of the
22 printer, in which case, the serial number will have to be manually entered into the printer prior
23 to the step 124.

24 Additionally, as indicated previously, the serial number is but one example of a
25 unique characteristic that may be the basis upon which the customer pass code is generated.
26 Other unique characteristics that may be used, including product registration numbers or

1 service contract numbers are used in a similar manner to the serial number, and consequently,
2 only the use of the serial number will be discussed herein. Nevertheless, this discussion of the
3 use of a serial number should be considered as representative of the use of other types of
4 unique characteristics or unique strings that may be used.

5 As indicated at a step 106, the printer is then sold to a customer. In one
6 embodiment, the printer contains one or more dormant features 28 (of Figure 1) that are not
7 enabled and which remain dormant after the sale of the printer 12. Thus, at a step 108, the
8 customer decides that he/she desires to use one or more of the dormant features. The
9 customer then contacts the manufacturer, for instance, by calling customer service, as
10 indicated at a step 110.

11 As indicated at a step 112, the customer is requested to perform certain requisite
12 actions, and the customer performs these actions. As discussed above, these actions may
13 comprise, for example, special training, receiving certain instructions, or paying a fee. Once
14 the requisite actions are performed, the customer is requested to ascertain the serial number
15 26 of the printer 12. The serial number 26 may be printed on the printer, and be readable by
16 the customer, or the customer may be instructed to access the serial number 26 using the user
17 interface 18. The user interface, through the serial number provision module 20 then
18 communicates with the controller 24 and provides the serial number 26 to the customer. The
19 customer then provides the serial number to the customer service representative, as indicated
20 at the step 114. Of course, if the serial number or other unique characteristic that is to be
21 used as the seed for generation of the customer pass code is already known to the customer
22 representative, step 114 may be omitted.

23 The customer service representative at a step 116 then enters the serial number 26
24 (or other unique characteristic) into the pass code generation program 16 that is preferably
25 resident or accessible through a computer 14 to which the customer service representative has
26

1 access. The customer service representative preferably uses the serial number reception
2 module 38 through the user interface 36, as discussed above.

3 The serial number 26 or other string is then passed to the mathematical manipulation
4 module, and at a step 118, the serial number is mathematically manipulated in a selected
5 manner. In one embodiment, the mathematical manipulation comprises adding selected digits
6 of the serial number together, multiplying the sum by a selected integer, then adding the sum
7 to that product. The result is then truncated into a three digit customer pass code 23. Of
8 course, any suitable manipulation may be conducted, whether mathematical or not. In
9 addition, the mathematical manipulations may include any combination of addition/subtraction
10 44, transformation of letters 45, multiplication 46, division 48, truncation 50, and any other
11 selected operations.

12 The resultant customer pass code 23 is then provided to the customer at a step 120.
13 The customer then enters the customer pass code 23 into the printer 12 at a step 122. The
14 pass code 23 is preferably received by the pass code reception module 22 through the user
15 interface 18. The customer pass code 23 is then provided to the pass code validation module
16 32, where it is validated. A version of the pass code 23 may be programmed into the printer
17 12 during manufacturing of the printer in one embodiment and may be compared to the
18 customer pass code. In a further embodiment, to be described herein, the customer pass code
19 23 is compared to a version of the pass code generated by the printer 12.

20 Under this embodiment, the serial number 26 is accessed by the validation module
21 32. The serial number is preferably accessed from the printer controller 24, but could be
22 manually inputted into the printer 12 by the customer or another person such as maintenance
23 personnel or the customer service representative, as discussed above.

24 The serial number 26 is then mathematically manipulated, preferably in the same
25 manner as the mathematical manipulation conducted by the mathematical manipulation
26 module 42 of the Program 16. The resultant character string is a printer version 33 of the

1 pass code which, as indicated by a step 126, is compared to the entered customer pass code
2 23. As shown at the decision step 128, if the printer generated pass code 33 matches the
3 customer pass code 23, the customer pass code 23 is considered valid.

4 When the customer pass code 23 is deemed to be valid, the dormant feature 28 to
5 be enabled is selected through the user interface 18 at a step 130. Of course, if only one
6 feature is dormant in the printer, this step may be omitted. Selection of the feature may be
7 conducted automatically by the mathematical manipulations, wherein the feature is assigned
8 a code that is embedded into the mathematical manipulations. Alternately, a separate code
9 for the particular feature may be provided to the customer and the customer then enters the
10 separate code.

11 Once the feature or features 28 are selected, the features are enabled by the feature
12 enablement module 30, as indicated at step 136. The method 100 then terminates at a step
13 138.

14 If the result of the validation step 128 is a negative, that is, the pass code is deemed
15 to be invalid, the method 100 proceeds to a step 140, where an error message is returned to
16 the customer. The dormant features 28 are not enabled, and the method 100 ends.

17 As can be seen from the above discussion, several problems existing in the art have
18 been overcome by the system and method of the present invention. A printer manufacturer
19 is now provided with the ability to manufacture and sell printers with dormant features that
20 can be enabled remotely in a controlled manner. Customers may determine a need for a
21 dormant feature after the time of sale of the printer and may enable the feature under
22 supervision of the printer manufacturer. A pass code can be generated based upon a unique
23 characteristic of the printer, such as an internal serial number, and the pass code can be
24 independently verified by the printer prior to enabling the dormant feature.

25 The present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing
26 from its spirit or essential characteristics. The described embodiments are to be considered

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1 in all respects only as illustrative and not restrictive. The scope of the invention is, therefore,
2 indicated by the appended claims rather than by the foregoing description. All changes which
3 come within the meaning and range of equivalency of the claims are to be embraced within
4 their scope.

5 What is claimed and desired to be secured by United States Letters Patent is:

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- 1 1. A method of remotely generating a unique printer pass code recognizable by
2 a printer, the method comprising:
 - 3 providing a unique character string for a printer;
 - 4 mathematically manipulating the unique character string; and
 - 5 recognizing the mathematically manipulated character string as a pass code.
- 6
- 7 2. The method of claim 1, wherein providing a unique character string for a
8 printer comprises locating a printer serial number resident within the printer.
- 9
- 10 3. The method of claim 2, wherein locating a printer serial number resident with
11 in the printer comprises locating a printer serial number programmed into a digital controller
12 during manufacturing of the printer.
- 13
- 14 4. The method of claim 1, wherein providing a unique character string for a
15 printer is conducted by a user of the printer and wherein mathematically manipulating the
16 unique character string comprises entering the character string into a computer program
17 which receives the character string as input, conducting mathematical manipulations on the
18 character string, and outputting the result as the pass code.
- 19
- 20 5. The method of claim 1, further comprising entering the pass code into the
21 printer.
- 22
- 23 6. The method of claim 5, wherein recognizing the mathematically manipulated
24 character string as a pass code is conducted subsequent to entering the pass code into the
25 printer and further comprises the printer conducting a mathematical manipulation similar to
- 26

1 the one used to generate the pass code and comparing the result to the pass code entered into
2 the printer to see if the two codes correspond.

3

4 7. The method of claim 1, further comprising enabling a previously dormant
5 feature of the printer in response to a favorable result of recognizing the mathematically
6 manipulated character string as a correct pass code for the printer.

7

8 8. The method of claim 1, wherein mathematically manipulating the unique
9 character string comprises conducting a series of mathematical operations on the character
10 string.

11

12 9. The method of claim 8, wherein mathematically manipulating the unique
13 character string further comprises truncating the result of the series of mathematical
14 operations on the character string.

15

16 10. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing the pass code to a
17 customer in return for the customer performing a desired action.

18

19 11. A printer pass code system, for remotely generating a unique printer pass code
20 recognizable by a printer, the system comprising:

21 a unique character string assigned to a printer;

22 a manipulation algorithm for mathematically manipulating the unique string;

23 and

24 a verification module within the printer for recognizing the mathematically
25 manipulated character string as a pass code.

26

1 12. The system of claim 11, wherein the unique character string comprises a
2 printer serial number resident within the printer.

3

4 13. The system of claim 12, wherein the printer serial number resident within the
5 printer comprises a printer serial number programmed into a digital controller of the printer
6 during manufacturing of the printer.

7

8 14. The system of claim 11, wherein the manipulation algorithm is embodied in
9 a computer program which is configured to receive the character string as input, conduct
10 mathematical manipulations on the character string, and output the result as the pass code.

11

12 15. The system of claim 11, wherein the printer is configured to receive entry of
13 the pass code by a user.

14

15 16. The system of claim 15, wherein the verification module is located within the
16 printer and is configured to receive the pass code and to conduct a mathematical manipulation
17 similar to the one used to generate the pass code and to compare the result to the pass code
18 entered into the printer to see if the two codes correspond.

19

20 17. The system of claim 11, further comprising a feature enablement module
21 configured to enable a previously dormant feature of the printer in response to a favorable
22 result of the validation module recognizing the mathematically manipulated character string
23 as a correct pass code for the printer.

24

25 18. The system of claim 11, wherein the mathematical manipulation module is
26 configured to conduct a series of mathematical operations on the character string.

1 19. The system of claim 18, wherein the mathematical manipulation module is
2 configured to truncate the result of the series of mathematical operations on the character
3 string.

4

5 20. The method of claim 11, further comprising a feature of the printer that is
6 accessible to a customer only with the use of the pass code.

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1
2 **UNIQUE PRINTER PASS CODE**
3 **SYSTEM AND METHOD**
4
5

6 **ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION**

7 A unique printer pass code system and method provide the ability to remotely
8 generate a unique pass code for printers operating under the system and method. A printer
9 is configured to independently verify that a submitted pass code is the correct pass code for
10 that printer. The pass code may be generated based upon a unique character string or other
11 characteristic resident within the printer. The unique character string may comprise a serial
12 number programmed into a printer controller during manufacturing of the printer. The unique
13 character string is accessed and passed through a mathematical manipulation algorithm which
14 transforms the character string into a pass code. The pass code may be a truncated result of
15 the mathematical manipulations. One version of the algorithm may be remote to the printer
16 for generating the pass code and a second version may be resident within the printer for
17 validating submitted pass codes. In one application, customer service representatives receive
18 the serial number from customers desiring to enable a dormant feature of the printer and enter
19 the serial number into a computer program. The program mathematically manipulates and
20 truncates the serial number and outputs the resultant pass code. The customer enters the pass
21 code into the printer, which independently verifies the pass code and if the pass code is
22 correct, enables the printer function.

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↓

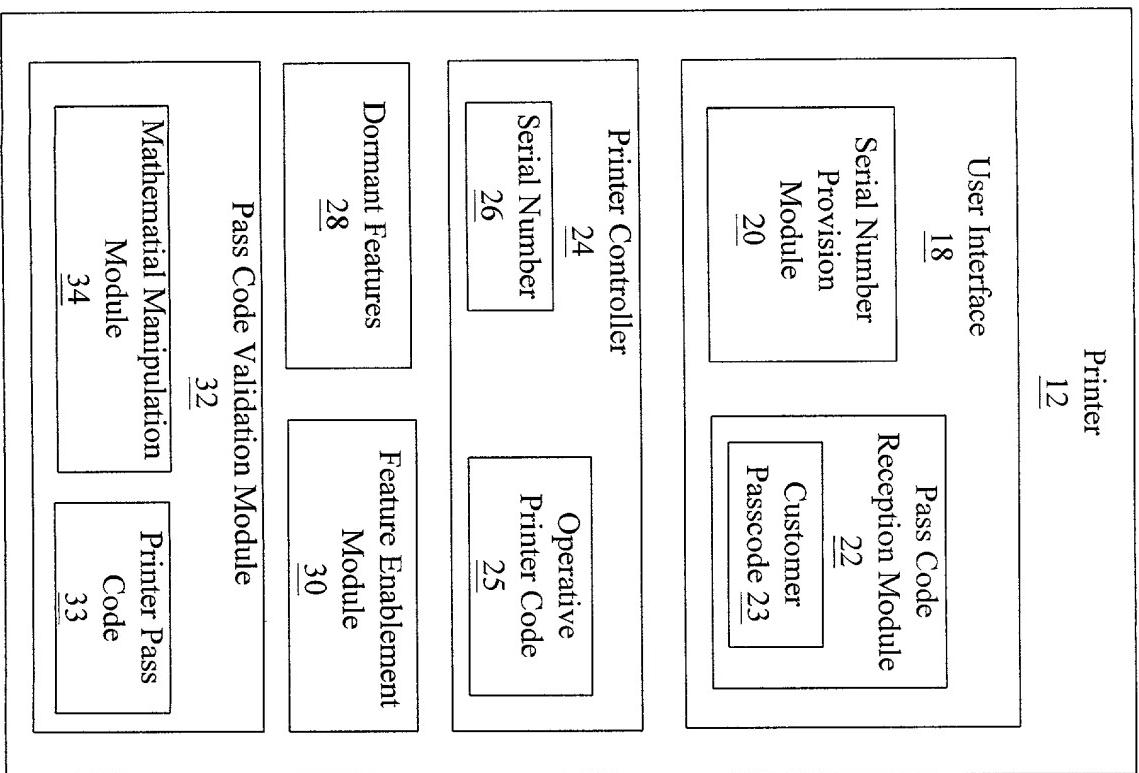
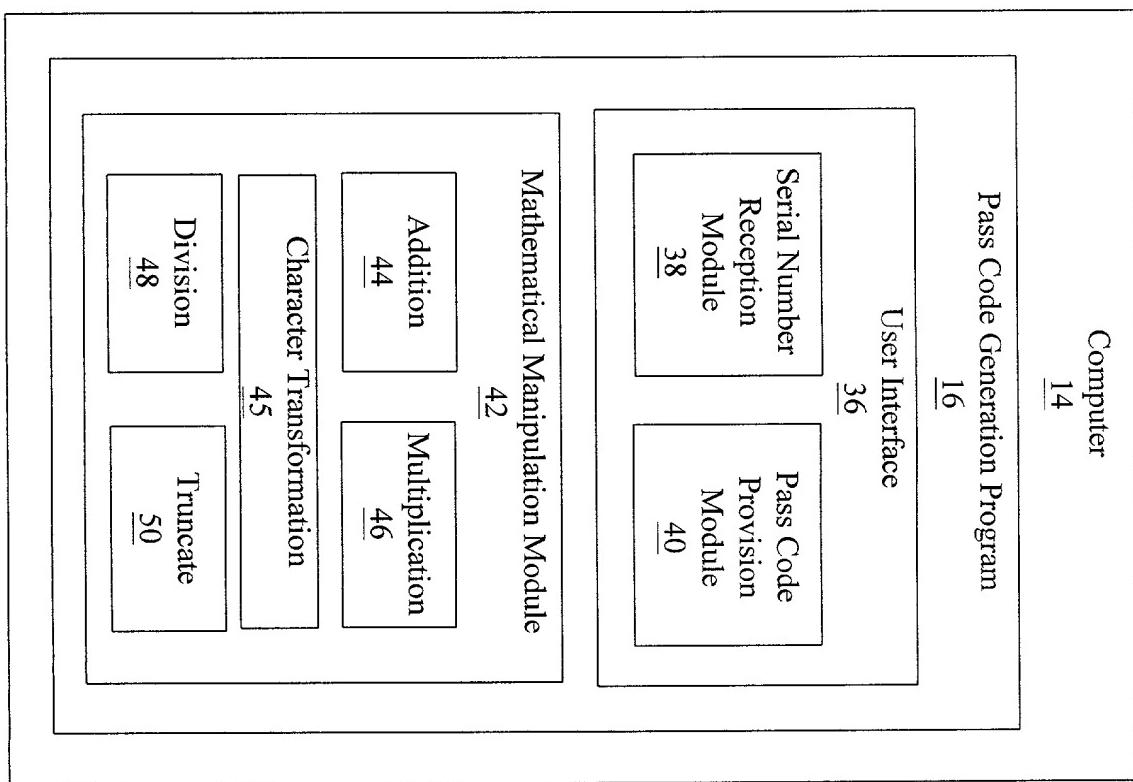


FIG 1



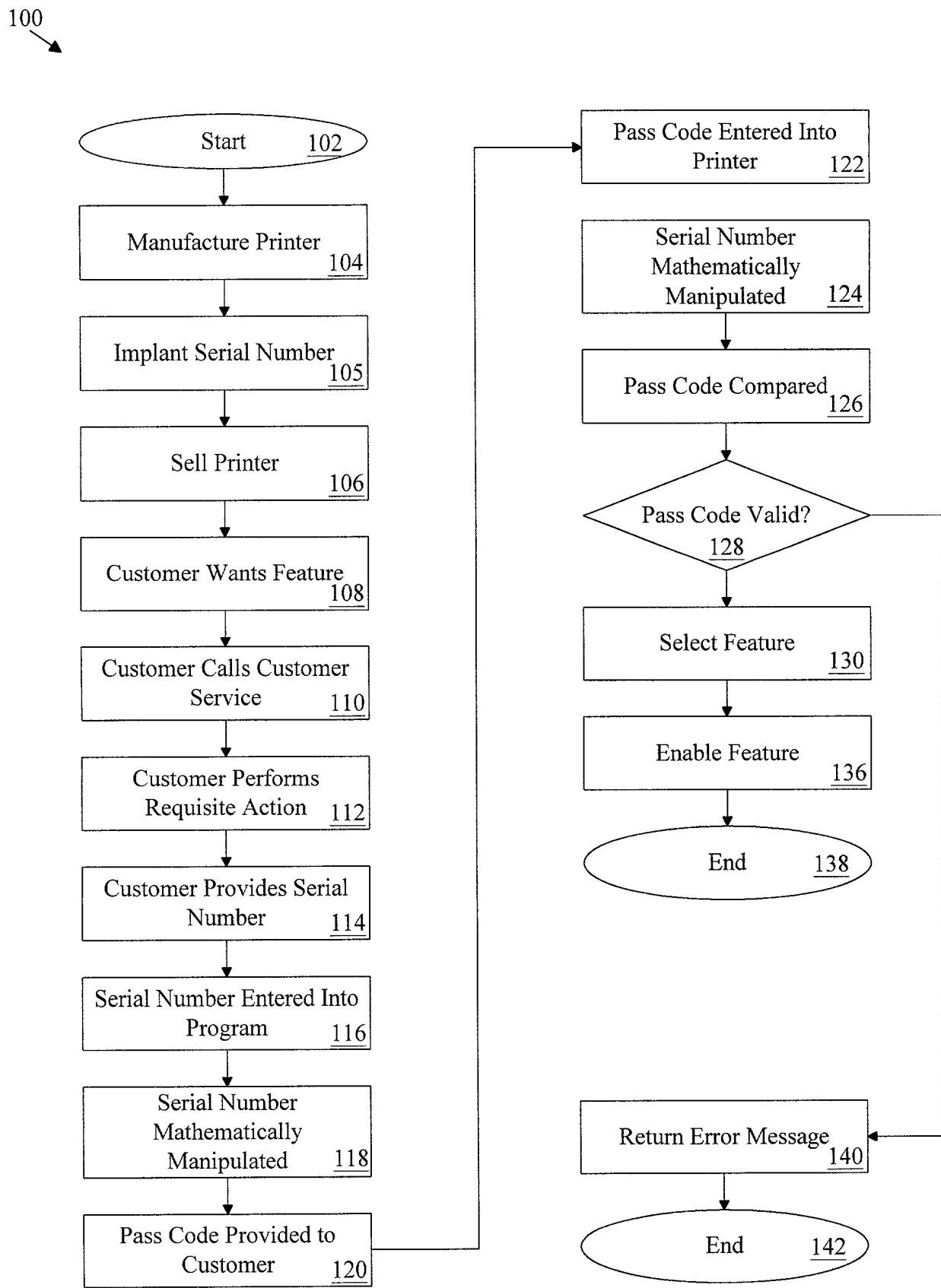


FIGURE 2

Docket No.: BLD9-00-055

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence and citizenship are as stated below next to my name:

I believe I am the original, first and joint inventor of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled

UNIQUE PRINTER AND PASS CODE SYSTEM AND METHOD

the specification of which (check one)

X is attached hereto.

was filed on

as Application Serial No. _____
and was amended on _____ (if applicable)

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s)

Priority Claimed

none
(Number)

(Country)

(Day/Month/Year filed)

Yes No

No

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, Section 120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, Section 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56, which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

none
(Application Serial No.)

(Edit-Data)

(Status) (patented, pending, abandoned)

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

POWER OF ATTORNEY: As named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith. (list name and registration number)

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